

# CONTINUANCE

Knowledge and Understanding Passing from Generation to Generation

Fall 2008/Winter 2009

## A Champion for Civic Engagement



**In this issue**

**Governors Applaud Civic Engagement**

**Solving Problems through Creative Dialogue**

**Reaching across the Aisle**

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*Improving education through  
intergenerational engagement and leadership.*

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## Continuance Magazine

Fall 2008/Winter 2009

Vol. 23: 1 & 2

### Knowledge and Understanding Passing from Generation to Generation

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### INTERGENERATIONAL INITIATIVE

The goal of the Intergenerational Initiative is to create an infrastructure of retiree involvement. The following actions set that goal in motion:

- promote intergenerational engagement and leadership that will help solve the perplexing problems of education
- advocate for a public policy responsive to the needs and resources of all ages
- foster communication and contact between generations and cultures
- enrich the educational experience through lifelong service and learning
- publicize the stories about the good things happening in education through intergenerational leadership

*Founded in 1987 with funding from the  
Illinois Board of Higher Education*

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# A Modern-Day CCC Links Talents to Needs

In 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was established to address the economic turmoil of the depression and sponsor work to replenish America's natural resources. Young men participated in every state by planting trees, building bridges, and constructing mountain roads to fight forest fires.

In 2009, there are many similarities to the events surrounding the development of the CCC. Our economy is in turmoil and unemployment has topped 7%. We have a growing group of the citizenry — retirees — with time that could be used to replenish natural and community resources. Instead of planting trees, they could plant the seeds of academic success with youthful scholars-to-be. Instead of building bridges, they could connect to others in the community through technology or one-on-one interaction. Instead of constructing roads, they could build pathways for retirees to participate in their communities.

The time is right for a modern-day CCC to enlist retirees in developing a service infrastructure, which President Obama calls the architecture of service. The architecture is simply a system that connects talents with needs.

We don't have to start from scratch with the service infrastructure. Good examples abound, such

as the Retiree Leading model in Canton at Spoon River Community College. Retirees Leading is based on community partnerships that immerse retirees in the workings of the community and help them hone their leadership skills. The project has graduated 50 retirees over the last two years and has a waiting list of retirees eager for the training.

In the Cover Story, Harris Wofford describes how Roosevelt developed the CCC by connecting talents with needs. He followed three simple steps: First, he started a conversation with his Cabinet, about how they could design the CCC based on other successful programs. Like many of our leaders and policymakers, Roosevelt's cabinet was skeptical. Second, Roosevelt assigned the development to Cabinet members who had the expertise: the Army and the Departments of Agriculture, Interior and Labor. Third, he championed the progress.

The architecture for enlisting retirees to help in schools and communities can follow a similar simple pattern. First, college presidents, policymakers, educators, business leaders and their boards can initiate conversations about what could be accomplished. Second, if the operation is tied to a national service entity, such as AmeriCorps, VISTA, RSVP, a Volunteer Center



or state agency, it has support to ensure continuity. Third, the champions who started the conversation will follow the progress and acknowledge the contributions of volunteers.

*More to Give*, a report commissioned by AARP and written by John Bridgeland, Robert Putnam, and Harris Wofford, calls the progress of engaging older generations "a signpost of our country's values." Retirees are the longest-living, best-educated, wealthiest, and most highly skilled of America's generations and, yes, *they have more to give*.

"The American people are ready to serve their communities, but not enough have been asked or know how," says President Barack Obama. Our challenge in Illinois is to do the "asking" and develop well-managed organizations to connect talents of older adults with the needs of society.

-Editor Jane Angelis

# A Champion for Civic Engagement

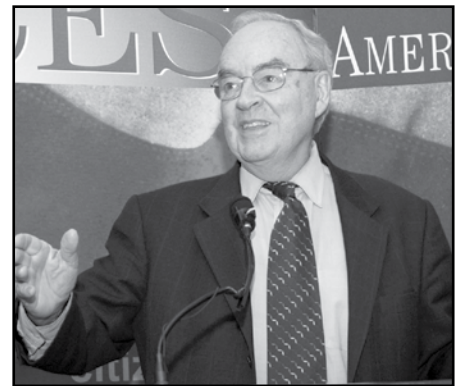
## Service Can Transform Lives

*If anyone understands national service and its potential for solving America's problems, it is Harris Wofford. He has been an advisor to presidents and a powerful force behind every major service development over the last 50 years. In addition, he has served as president of two colleges, CEO of the Corporation for National Service, director of the Peace Corp in Ethiopia, U.S. Senator from Pennsylvania, Civic Rights leader, Chairman of America's Promise, author, and one who lives the life of civic engagement.*

Harris Wofford offers three examples of the way service can transform lives and how people come to see themselves as assets to their communities and country.

"A principal in New Jersey moved to Florida in retirement and played golf until he was bored. One day he heard about the America Reads program for volunteer tutors and volunteered. The school discovered that he was a former principal

and he discovered that the school needed better organizing for their volunteers. By the time I visited him he was in charge and had built a successful program. He said 'I have never had such fun. I am doing what as principal I dreamed someone would do in my school. We are helping the teachers in after-school programs and in the classroom with the extra tutoring that comes from the full range of things that well-organized



**Harris Wofford**

volunteers can do.' He said, 'I have a whole new life with a great challenge and I will probably live longer because of this involvement in my community.'"

"On Martin Luther King Day during a service event, a young African American man was introduced as one of their stars. He had been a school drop out, in a gang and heading into drugs





Participating in a City Year forum on the importance of national service

and toward destruction. He joined the youth corps and was assigned to Habitat for Humanity. I asked him why he joined this youth corps. At first he joshed a little and said, 'I thought it would be a different kind of corps, different people, and I might not die at the end.' A little later he said, 'The real reason is that I got tired of all the good people coming to help me in our housing project. All kinds of people coming to do good against me. Now I am the one doing something patriotic and good.'"

"During WWII the country was pulled together by the common goal of winning the war and

*"A change of mindset is needed for older Americans. They need to see themselves and to be seen as assets."*

service became a common expectation for Americans. That expectation and wish for all Americans is still in my head and heart."

Wofford has experienced national service of all kinds. After war-time service in the Army Air Corps, he completed a B.A. at the University of Chicago, then studied in India, and with his wife Claire and wrote the book, *India Afire*. He completed a law degree at Howard University and Yale Law Schools. He worked with Martin Luther King in the 1950s and walked with King, John Lewis and others from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. He served as president of two colleges, SUNY at Old Westbury and Bryn Mawr College. As Senator from 1991-95, Wofford sponsored legislation with Senators Ted Kennedy and Barbara Mikulski to establish the Corporation for National and Community Service.

That Bill combined the programs from the War on Poverty, including VISTA, the three Senior Programs, (Foster Grandparents Programs, RSVP and Senior Companions) as well as Service Learning. In 1995, Wofford became CEO of the Corporation for National and Community Service.

When former Governor George Romney proposed a Presidents' Summit on Service, Wofford joined in organizing the event that was held in Philadelphia in 1997. General Colin Powell chaired the Summit and with all the living presidents, along with governors, mayors and leaders from all sectors, issued a joint call to service. That call combined volunteering on a massive scale, an expansion of AmeriCorps, and launched the America's Promise Alliance, which focused on the well being of young people.

As CEO of the Corporation for National Service, Wofford started with 20,000 AmeriCorps members. At the end of the Clinton Administration there were 50,000 members and soon after 9/11 under President George Bush, it grew to 75,000. The Kennedy-Hatch Serve America Act, which was unveiled during the ServiceNation Summit on September 11, 2008, calls for an expansion to 250,000 members. The Serve America Act was supported by candidates John McCain and Barack Obama along with a group of Republicans and



President Barack Obama sends a call to service for all ages. He understands the problems of getting involved. "Many Americans who want to serve are not aware of service opportunities that fit their interests or schedules, aren't sure how to distinguish among various opportunities and don't know how to sign up."

"Older Americans have a wide range of skills and knowledge to contribute to local and national public service efforts. New efforts are needed particularly to tap the idealism and experience of the baby boomer generation — the largest and healthiest generation to enter retirement in history."

Democrats. The bill is currently in committee.

### Organizing Service

Wofford points to Franklin Roosevelt's organization of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) as a powerful example of how full-time citizen service can be organized on a large scale.

In his first hundred days, Roosevelt established the CCC by directing four of his Cabinet Secretaries. He said to the Secretary of Labor, Francis Perkins, 'I want you to coordinate the plan. I want the Labor Department to find the out-of-school, out-of-work young men. I want the Interior Department and the Agriculture Department to identify the most important problems on our public lands and to get the experts who know how to solve them. I want the Army to build the camps and supply the initial structure for the leaders of the CCC.' The department heads were skeptical but he said, 'And I want 250,000 CCC members at work by the end of the summer.'"

"Four months later—by July 31—they reported more than 300,000 young men in 1600 camps. Roosevelt followed the progress closely, week by week. He gave extraordinary attention to the CCC, which became the most popular program of the New Deal."

"When President Obama proposes 175,000 new AmeriCorps members, he can look to the example of Roosevelt's CCC and connect AmeriCorps to the

appropriate cabinet and federal agencies. Obama's plan calls for five new Corps, Education, Health, Clean Energy, Veterans, and Homeland Security and each of those new corps should be connected to the appropriate federal agencies.

Much of the structure for national service is based on state commissions and works through non-profit and educational organizations. President Obama is considering a White House unit for social innovation and a fund that will encourage non-profit and educational organizations to produce new programs.

### Involvement of Older Generations

"President Obama says that older Americans must be a part of national and local service efforts. Experience Corps is just one



Passing sandbags from one to the next to hold back the rising waters

*The value of service needs to be made clear to people and to state and local leaders, so that they can mobilize service to solve major problems.*

example of many different ventures that try to find the best way, to reach, to ask, to enlist, to help older Americans become a big part of service efforts."

"President Obama wants full-time service an option for everyone. He is clear that service should not be limited to young people. The Peace Corps is already putting new emphasis on 50+ Americans to be an increasing portion of the Peace Corps volunteers. I would like to see shorter terms of 3 or 6 months or one year for overseas volunteering, particularly for older Americans who have needed skills."

"Obama also proposes an expansion of the three existing Senior Corps Programs and Experience Corps and the expansion of non-stipended service on a big scale. In the service field we need to change the mindset of the young people and the public, from seeing them as burdens and problems but as assets and potential leaders. The parallel change of mindset is needed for older Americans. They need to see themselves and to be seen as assets."

### The Future for National Service

Like the New Jersey principal who organized a volunteer tutoring program in his retirement, national

service will be enriched by the talents of older people. Like the young man who joined a youth corps after experiencing people "doing good against him" in the projects, all ages must recognize their potential to be an asset for their communities. The value of service needs to be made clear to people and to state and local leaders, so that they can mobilize service to solve major problems.

Roosevelt's CCC gives hope that new ideas can work if the right people come together. By weaving connections between people of different backgrounds, races, and ideologies, our democracy will be stronger with people working together, becoming friends and providing effective leadership. "To others coming of age," Wofford says that "at four score and three years old, I am having some of the best times of my life. I hope others will see and enjoy the opportunities in the later stages of their lives as a time for encore work and service in many fields in ways that can contribute to our communities, our country and the world.



*More to Give*, a report commissioned by AARP and written by John Bridgeland, Robert Putnam, and Harris Wofford is available on the Internet. It is a valuable resource for civic engagement projects with older adults.

<http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/general/moretogive.pdf>

## You Can't Learn to Play the Harp without Playing the Harp

by Harris Wofford

Active service means seeking to solve significant public problems by taking responsibility in our communities, the nation, and the world. We can control our destiny and this happens through good citizenship and active service.

What are the skills of citizenship? We learn about citizenship by doing it. To say you can teach citizenship in the classroom is like a basketball coach saying "I taught foul shots last week with three lectures."

Artistotle said : "You can't learn to play the harp without playing the harp." Likewise, You can't build a house without building a house. You can't establish justice without promoting justice. You can't have quality service without doing service. You can't have good citizenship without involvement in citizenship.

What makes a truly good citizen is the same thing that makes a good worker--taking personal responsibility, being part of a team, and looking beyond immediate personal interests to the common good.



## The Serve America Act

### A Legislative Initiative to Expand and Improve Domestic and International Service Opportunities for All Americans

Introduced by Senator Edward M. Kennedy  
and Senator Orrin Hatch

#### Themes

- Expand opportunities for people to serve at every stage of life.
- Use service to meet specific national challenges. Put service to work to solve our most pressing challenges, such as tackling the dropout crisis and strengthening our schools; improving energy efficiency; safeguarding the environment; improving health care in low-income communities; expanding economic opportunities for low-income individuals; and preparing for and responding to disasters and emergencies.

#### I. Ask Many More Americans to Give a Year to Solve Specific Challenges:

Building on the success of AmeriCorps, the legislation will create new, effective “Corps” focused on areas of national need. It will ask 175,000 Americans to give a year of service through these corps as part of a new national commitment to solve these challenges, expanding the number of national service participants to 250,000.

#### II. Increase Opportunities to Serve by People of All Ages:

- For Students, Increase Service Early in Life: Service early in life will put more and more youth on a path to a lifetime of service. The legislation will improve opportunities for young people in low income, high-need communities to engage in service to improve their own communities.
- For Working Adults, Encourage Employers to Let Employees Serve, by establishing a tax incentive for employers who allow employees to take paid leave for full-time service.
- For Retirees, Value Their Skills and Make Service Work for Them. Many retiring citizens are ready, willing, and able to be involved in service and have

skills the public needs – but none of the current service programs are structured with their needs in mind. The legislation will enhance incentives for retirees to give a year of service through the Corps, and will establish “Encore Fellowships” to help retirees who wish to transition to longer-term public service.

- For Americans of All Ages, Increase Volunteering. Not all Americans can make a significant time commitment to service, but many volunteer in other ways. The legislation will expand the volunteer pool by establishing a “Volunteer Generation Fund” to help nonprofit organizations recruit and manage more volunteers.

#### III. Support Innovation in the Nonprofit Sector:

Social entrepreneurs who have launched innovative nonprofit organizations such as Teach for America and Citizen Schools in Boston are experimenting with new solutions to pressing problems. The legislation will recognize and support the role of effective social entrepreneurs in solving our national challenges:

- Establish a Commission to study and improve how the federal government, nonprofits, and the private sector work together to meet national challenges effectively.
- Apply Effective Business Strategies to the Nonprofit Sector, by establishing a network of “Community Solution Funds” that are basically venture capital funds to help the nonprofit sector seek talent and put it to work.

#### IV. Improve and Expand International Service and America’s Respect in the World

- Support for Short-Term International Service Opportunities: We must expand the Peace Corps so more Americans can provide critical assistance to people across the globe while promoting America’s international standing. But many skilled Americans are unable to give two years. The legislation will strengthen the current “Volunteers for Prosperity” program, which coordinates and supports short-term international service opportunities for skilled professionals to serve in developing nations.

[http://s3.amazonaws.com/btcreal/855/Kennedy\\_Hatch\\_Serve\\_America\\_Act\\_Summary.pdf](http://s3.amazonaws.com/btcreal/855/Kennedy_Hatch_Serve_America_Act_Summary.pdf)

# A Brief History of National Service

## Corporation for National and Community Service

When faced with challenges, our nation has always relied on the dedication and action of its citizens. The Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) carries on a long tradition of citizen involvement by providing opportunities for Americans of all ages to improve their communities through service.

## The Civilian Conservation Corps

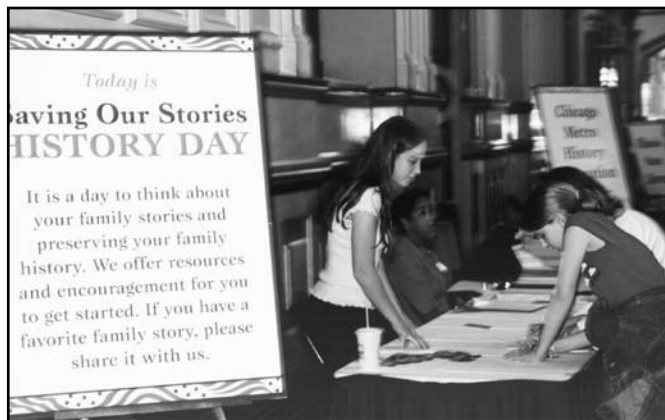
During the Great Depression of the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the Civilian Conservation Corps. Four million young people joined in response to his call to service, restoring the nation's parks, revitalizing the economy, and supporting their families and themselves. For 11 years the Civilian Conservation Corps provided billions of dollars in services and enabled millions of families to live in dignity.

## The GI Bill

During the 1940's, the GI Bill linked wartime service to educational benefits, offering returning World War II veterans the opportunity to pursue higher education in partial compensation for service to their country. Veterans improved their own lives by attending college. They also contributed mightily to America's future. With the education they received, those citizens helped spark the economic boom that helped make America the world's leading economy.

## Peace Corps

In the 1960s the call to service came from President John F. Kennedy, who challenged Americans in his inaugural address "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country." In response to this challenge, the Peace Corps was born. The Peace Corps continues to engage thousands of volunteers who travel the world far and wide, building schools where none existed, helping farmers provide food for the hungry, and creating hospitals to care for the sick.



Students prepare a display at the Illinois Capitol as part of a service-learning project.

After returning from overseas, Peace Corps volunteers put their new knowledge of others to work at home, in the spirit of citizenship, changing America for the better.

## The War on Poverty

President Lyndon B. Johnson brought the spirit of the Peace Corps home to America by creating Volunteers in Service to America (VISTA) in 1964. VISTA, which is now part of AmeriCorps, continues to fund programs under the sponsorship of local public agencies or nonprofit organizations to improve the condition of people living in under-served, low-income communities throughout America. Other initiatives such as the Retired and Senior Volunteer Corps (RSVP), the Foster Grandparent Program, and the Senior Companion Program were developed in order to engage older Americans in the work of improving the nation.

## Youth Service Movement

In 1970, Congress created the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC), a summer environmental employment program for youth ages 15-18. In 1976, California became the first state to create its own youth conservation program, the California Conservation Corps. Youth Conservation Corps still operates on a limited basis in some national parks and wildlife refuges. Private funders helped create additional youth corps programs during the seventies, including

the Youth Volunteer Corps of America, City Year, and Youth Build. Associations such as Youth Service America (YSA) and the National Association of Service and Conservation Corps (NASCC) were formed to work with the various youth service movements. Youth service programming grew on college campuses, sponsored by such national programs as the Campus Outreach Opportunity League (COOL) and Campus Compact.

### **Revival of Interest National and Community Service**

President George H. W. Bush helped spark a revival of interest in national service when he instituted the White House Office of National Service in 1989. In 1990 Congress passed the National and Community Service Act, which created a Commission on National and Community Service sought to “renew the ethic of civic responsibility in the United States.”

Full implementation began in 1992, when the commission awarded \$64 million in grants to support four broad types of state and local community service efforts. These initiatives were the Serve- America programs (now Learn and Serve) which involved school-aged youth in community service and service-learning through a variety of school and community-based activities; Higher Education Innovative Projects aimed at involving college students in community service and at promoting community service at

educational institutions; American Conservation and Youth Service Corps, supporting summer and year-round youth corps initiatives that engage both in- and out-of-school youth in community service work; and the National and Community Service Demonstration Models, for programs that were potential models for large-scale national service.

The National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC), a demonstration program to explore the possibility of using post-Cold War military resources to help solve problems here at home, was enacted later as part of the 1993 Defense Authorization Act. It is a residential service program modeled on the Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps and the United States military.



**Students and elders dance the limbo in a multicultural service experience.**

### **National and Community Service Trust Act**

President Bill Clinton sponsored the National and Community Service Trust Act, a revision of the National and Community Service Act of 1990, which was passed by

a bipartisan coalition of Members of Congress and signed into law on September 21, 1993. The legislation created a new federal agency, the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), to administer federally funded national service programs. The law created AmeriCorps, which was designed to support local, state, and national organizations across the nation that involve Americans in results-driven community service. Individual AmeriCorps participants, known as members, typically serve for a year, during which they receive a living allowance. After service, members receive an education award, administered by the National Service Trust, and paid as a voucher redeemable for current education costs at colleges, universities, other post-secondary institutions, and approved school-to-work programs, or to pay back qualified student loans already incurred.

The legislation drew on the principles of both the Civilian Conservation Corps and the GI Bill, encouraging Americans to serve and rewarding those who do. The new agency also took over the programs of two previous agencies, ACTION, which was responsible for running VISTA and the National Senior Service Corps programs, and the more recent Commission on National and Community Service, including the NCCC, forming a new network of national service programs under AmeriCorps.

# *New Movement for Civic Engagement*

## **The Atlantic Philanthropies Targets the Civic Engagement of Older Adults**

The effort for civic engagement started in 2001 when Brian Hofland, formerly with the Retirement Research Foundation in Chicago, joined The Atlantic Philanthropies to conduct a strategic review of its aging programs. When he came on board, the aging agenda had focused primarily on the frail older adult, like most of the aging programs in the country at that time. During the strategic review, Hofland recognized that 85% of older adults are independent and that they are the fastest growing resource in the country with much to contribute.

In December 2001, Atlantic's Board approved the Aging programme's strategic plan, which included civic engagement. □ Fritz Schwarz, now Atlantic's Board Chair, was a champion for the focus on civic engagement. □ He is an exemplar of civic engagement in his own life, as he went from a partner at Cravath, Swaine & Moore and in government service as counsel to the Church Committee and the New York Corporation Counsel in the Koch Administration to his current roles as Chair of the New York City Campaign Finance Board



**Brian Hofland, Director of the Aging Programme, The Atlantic Philanthropies**

and Senior Counsel at the Brennan Center for Justice.

Brian Hofland, Director of the Aging Programme at The Atlantic Philanthropies, advises organizations seeking to obtain support for civic engagement programs within their own organizations to "get allies and champions on boards and perhaps among senior management who are in their encore careers or are involved in service, or who have spouses, friends or colleagues who are."

Shortly after conducting the strategic reviews for the U.S. and international aging programs, Hofland was promoted to Director



**Laura Robbins, Head of the U.S. Aging Program, The Atlantic Philanthropies**

of the Ageing Programme and brought Laura Robbins on in 2003 as Head of the U.S. Aging Program.

In order to create a more robust field, Atlantic recognized that there needed to be more leaders in the field of civic engagement, more models around volunteerism, work, and lifelong learning, and more pathways for organizations to create opportunities for older adults. Policies that promote civic engagement, such as the Serve America Act are a welcome contribution to the field. There also need to be more funders for civic engagement, particularly at the community level.

## Governors Applaud Civic Engagement

Over time, the institutions and individuals engaged in older adult civic engagement began to comprise a robust field. As a coherent network they can see how their resources could be coupled with others and create a more comprehensive program. When you pull networks together, everyone wins.

With the encouragement of its CEO Gara LaMarche, Atlantic will be building on the field's success by working to strengthen the voice of older adults.

Older adults are the fastest growing resource in the United States," said Laura Robbins. "When pathways are created for older adults of all races, ethnicities and at all income levels to engage, they make a difference. In order to fully capitalize on this enormous social asset, pathways and models must be created to enable older adults to serve and advocate for social change on behalf of themselves and others."

The National Governors Association (NGA), Center for Best Practices launched the Civic Engagement of Older Adults initiative in 2006. With generous support from the Atlantic Philanthropies, the initiative seeks to increase civic engagement among older adults by capitalizing on the leadership of state governors. The goal of the initiative is to improve the health and lives of older Americans by substantially increasing the proportion of adults who participate in employment, education and training, and meaningful volunteer activities. The NGA Center for Best Practices has provided intensive technical assistance to fourteen states to develop and implement strategic plans that will lead to the increased engagement of older adults in work, volunteering, and learning.

The civic engagement of older adults is important to states due to the social, economic and budgetary implications of an aging population. Through this project, the NGA Center for Best Practices has an opportunity to work with state leaders on improving the health and financial benefits that engagement can bring to older adults and communities. Organizations as well as states also benefit from the continued engagement of older adults by maintaining a skilled and knowledgeable workforce in both paid and unpaid positions. Importantly, engaged older adults help to increase organizational competitiveness and ensure that state and local economies remain strong.

Linda Hoffman, Senior Policy Analyst and Martin Simon, Director, Workforce Development Programs, NGA Center for Best Practices are the program coordinators.

Fourteen states have participated in the NGA Policy Academy for the Civic Engagement of Older Adults including Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Mexico, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Wyoming.

When governors were asked for comments, Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer and North Carolina Governor Peg Perdu sent comments even though they weren't participants in the project. They are strong supporters of older adult civic engagement.



Alabama Governor Bob Riley



Idaho Governor Otter (C. L. "Butch" Otter)



Illinois Governor Patrick Quinn

"Workforce development has been one of the keys to Alabama's economic success over the last five or six years, and seniors are an important part of that workforce. Their knowledge and experience are invaluable. Many in my generation want to continue their careers, or find other ways to keep active. In Alabama, we wholeheartedly support that, and I'm proud of our state for advancing programs that encourage civic engagement for our seniors."

"We welcome the challenge of capitalizing on the knowledge and skills of Idaho's seniors. This NGA Policy Academy on Civic Engagement is very timely. Its focus on increasing employment access, enhancing education and training opportunities, and expanding volunteerism enables us to better harness the talent and energies of Idaho's Baby Boom population."

"In Gettysburg, Abraham Lincoln described the essence of American Democracy—that it is a government of the people, by the people and for the people. Civic engagement is critical to the democracy Lincoln described and the foundation for an ethic of service. Everyone can serve, particularly older Illinoisans who bring wisdom, experience and survival skills from their generation and generations past. "

### **Core Teams: National Governors Association Policy Academy for the Civic Engagement of Older Adults**

#### **Alabama:**

Commissioner Irene B. Collins, AL Dept. of Senior Services (Core Team Leader), Commissioner Steve Shivers, AL Dept. of Rehabilitation Services; Senator Gerald Dial, Executive Director, Alabama Rural Action Commission; J. William Curtis, Executive Director, East AL Regional Planning and Development Commission; Lisa Castaldo, Deputy Director, Governor's Office of Faith Based and Community Initiatives; Margaret McKenzie, Policy Analyst, Office of Governor Bob Riley; Kim Boswell, Director of Human Resources, AL Dept. of Rehabilitation Services; Anna Pritchett, Assoc. State Director for Advocacy and Outreach, AARP Alabama; Mike Malandro, Senior Workforce Development Coordinator, AL Dept. of Senior Service

#### **Idaho:**

Melinda Adams, Statewide Older Worker Coordinator; Cheryl Brush, Workforce Policy Adviser, Idaho Department of Labor; Don Drum, Deputy Director, Public Employee Retirement System of Idaho; Kelly Houston, Executive Director, Serve Idaho; Roger Madsen, Director, Idaho Department of Labor; Con Paulos, President, Con Paulos, Inc.; Tammy Perkins, Governor's Special Assistant, Office of the Governor; Kim Toryanski, Administrator, Idaho Commission on Aging; Dave Whaley, President, Idaho AFL-CIO; Jim Wordelman, State Director, AARP

#### **Illinois**

Jane Angelis, Director and Editor, SIU Carbondale; Robert Gallo, State Director, AARP; Marilyn Hennessy, Trustee, Retirement Research Foundation; John Hosteny, Director, Corp. for National & Community Service; Charles D. Johnson, Director, IL Dept. on Aging; Peggy Luce, Vice President, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce; Robert Mees, President, John A. Logan College; Michael O'Donnell, Executive Director, East Central IL Area Agency on Aging; Bernard Wong, President, Chinese American Service League





Maine Governor John Baldacci



Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley



Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick

"Maine's aging population is a tremendous resource. Older Mainers have contributed greatly to our State, and they continue to play a valuable role in our economy as the lynchpin of our future workforce. We are enriched by older adults who dedicate their significant talents, wisdom and time to benefit Maine communities."

"In Maryland, we recognize the contributions seniors can make to our workforce and institutions," stated Maryland Governor Martin O'Malley. "On the municipal level we had great success with Experience Corps Baltimore, where seniors were placed into classroom settings to support teachers in instruction and course presentation. Their presence allowed many students to receive individualized attention they may not have received otherwise."

"Older adults are in a unique position to give back. They have an incomparable depth of experience that can make a special difference in the life of a community," said Massachusetts Governor Deval L. Patrick. "Encouraging civic engagement among seniors is smart policy."

### Core Teams: National Governors Association Policy Academy for the Civic Engagement of Older Adults

#### Maine:

Diana Scully, Director, Office of Elder Services, Maine Department of Health and Human Services; Anne Schink, Program Officer, Commission for Community Service, Maine State Planning Office; Jane Gilbert, Deputy Commissioner, Maine Department of Labor; Alicia Kellogg, Director of Human Resources, Maine Department of Administrative & Financial Services; Mary Walsh, Director of Community Programs, Office of Elder Services, Maine Department of Health & Human Services; Amanda Rector, Economic Research Analyst, State Planning Office; Cheryl Miller, Senior Program Officer, Maine Development Foundation; Jud Dolphin, Executive Director, AARP Maine; Peaches Bass, Labor Program Specialist, ME Department of Labor

#### Maryland

Bruce Adams, Director, Montgomery County Government; Eric Brenner, Director, MD Governor's Grants Office; Sandra Cobb, Planning Administrator, Maryland Department of Aging; Joseph DeMattos, Jr, Senior State Director, AARP; Keith Hart, Director, Governor's Office on Service & Volunteerism; Gloria Lawlah, Secretary, Maryland Department of Aging; Crystal Martin, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation; Kevin Griffin Moreno, Program Officer, Baltimore Community Foundation; Wesley Queen, Assistant to the Dean for Public Health Advocacy, Univ. of Maryland School of Public Health; Ilene Rosenthal, Deputy Secretary, Maryland Department of Aging; John Stewart, Executive Director, Baltimore City Commission on Aging

#### Massachusetts

Deborah Banda, State Director, AARP Massachusetts; Suzanne Bump, Secretary, Executive Office of Labor & Workforce Development; Elizabeth Clay, Director, Office of Governor Deval L. Patrick; Michael Festa, Secretary, MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs; Emily Haber, CEO, Massachusetts Service Alliance; William Noone, Director, Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission; Ruth Palombo, Assistant Secretary, Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs; Karen Shack, Senior Workforce Development Consultant, Commonwealth Corporation; David Stevens, Executive Director, Massachusetts Councils on Aging; Barbara Wooten, Deputy Chief Human Resources Officer, Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer



New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson



New York Governor David Paterson

“Senior citizens play a vital role in our society today. Whether through work, volunteering, parenting or grandparenting, the knowledge and skills they share are some of the most valuable, passing their wisdom on to the next generations.”

“New Mexico has an invaluable wealth of seniors and individuals living with a disability who can share their personal experiences and wisdom to benefit society as a whole. Engage New Mexico! is an opportunity to call on these living treasures to help move our state forward while enriching their own lives even more through employment opportunities, volunteer efforts, and taking advantage of continuing education.”

“Here in New York, nearly three million volunteers contribute an annual average of over 366 million hours of service. This is a tradition worth fighting for because the value of such service translates into stronger communities, healthier families and a more hopeful nation. Volunteerism and community service are the foundations of our communities and improve the lives of every New Yorker. All of us “no matter our age or background” have something to contribute to the well-being of our neighbors and our State,” said Governor Paterson

### **Core Teams: National Governors Association Policy Academy for the Civic Engagement of Older Adults**

#### **New Mexico**

Hazel Mella, MA, Director, Governor Richardson's Office of Faith-Based & Community Initiatives; Sec. Cindy Padilla, NM Aging and Long-term Services Division; Lynne Anker-Unnever NM Aging and Long-term Services Division; John Arnold, NM Aging and Long-term Services Division; Norm Tucker, San Juan Community College; Tom Trujillo, NM Aging and Long-term Services Division

#### **New York**

Lois Aronstein, New York State Director, AARP; Michael Burgess, Director, NYS Office for the Aging; Ann DiSarro, Private Consultant; Lola Brabham Harder, Director of Human Services, NYS Governor's Office; Nancy Kiyonaga, Director of Workforce Planning, NYS Department of Civil Service; Jen McCormick, VP, Policy & Programs, Empire State Development Corp.; Margaret Moree, Director of Federal Affairs, The Business Council of NYS; Mario Musolino, Executive Deputy Commissioner, NYS Department of Labor; Greg Olsen, Deputy Director, NYS Office for the Aging; Mark Walter, Executive Director, NYS Office of National & Community Service

#### **Ohio**

Barbara E. Riley, (Lead), Ohio Department of Aging; Scott Layson, Ohio Department of Aging; Wendy Patton, Office of Governor Strickland; Bruce Madson, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services; Lisa Patt-McDaniel, Ohio Department of Development; Julia Hinten, Ohio Department of Development; Michael Taggart, Ohio Board of Regents; Cathy Hill, Ohio Board of Regents; Kitty Burscu, Ohio community Service Council; Paul Schrader, Corporation for National and Community Service; Bill Sundermeyer, AARP



North Carolina Governor  
Bev Perdue



Ohio Governor  
Ted Stickland



Pennsylvania Governor  
Ed Rendell



Wyoming Governor  
Dave Freudenthal

"We should all strive to make civic engagement a lifelong commitment. Service to others makes us all healthier and happier," said Governor Perdue. "Whether our older citizens are working, volunteering or educating, they have a wealth of knowledge to share, and energy to spare. Actually, I believe that our retirement years can be our most productive years."

"Older Ohioans are a vital part of our workforce, both today and in the future. With virtually all of the labor force growth in Ohio coming from those age 55 and over, ensuring they have the skills they need to succeed is of critical importance to the worker, the employer and the state. At the same time, creating meaningful opportunities for retirees looking for an encore career allows them to contribute the skills learned in the corporate world to better the lives of those in their own community."

"Pennsylvania has nearly 2.4 million residents over the age of 60, and that number is expected to increase to more than 3 million by 2020. Civic engagement programs are essential because they enable older Pennsylvanians to continue to enrich our Commonwealth, by sharing their experiences through work, volunteering, and lifelong learning opportunities."

"When we think about the economy, we need to think about Boomers as a resource. It puts us in a position where we're talking about all of the resources that are available as opposed to part of the resources that are available. Because you know we're all going to be there. It's an opportunity for us to say, 'You know, you've had one life. You've retired, but there's time for another one.'"

### **Core Teams: National Governors Association Policy Academy for the Civic Engagement of Older Adults**

#### **Pennsylvania**

Linda Blanchette, Deputy Secretary, PA Welfare Department; Ivonne Bucher, Chief of Staff, PA Department of Aging; Richard Chevrefils, State Director, AARP Pennsylvania; Nora Dowd Eisenhower, Secretary, Pennsylvania Department of Aging; Robert Garraty, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Workforce Investment Board; Kathleen Howley, Assistant Vice Chancellor, Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education; Karen Kaskey, Executive Director, PennSERVE: The Governor's Office of Citizen Service; Kurt Knaus, Managing Director, Experience Wave PA; Nancy Smith, Director, Bureau of State Employment; Andrea Taylor, Director of Training, Temple University; Harris Wooford, National Spokesman, Experience Wave; Naomi Wyatt, Secretary of Administration, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

#### **Wyoming**

Rob Black, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services Community Projects Manager; Brad Westby, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services Industry Partnerships Manager; Joanne Bowlby, AARP Wyoming, Associate Director, Communications; Rachel Chadderdon, ServeWyoming, Executive Director; Brandon Marshall, Wyoming Business Council, Business Retention & Entrepreneurship Program Manager; Jeremiah Rieman, Wyoming Department of Workforce Services, Policy Analyst; Michelle Ammerman, Wyoming Department of Health, Aging Division Interim Administrator; Danny Romero, Wyoming Department of Administration and Information Human Resources Division, Grievance/Appeals Coordinator

# Reaching Across the Aisle to

## U.S. Senate: 1964

In his Inaugural Address, President Barack Obama touched on many important events that made his journey to the White House possible. One touchstone, the Civil Rights Legislation of 1964 exemplified the give and take across the aisle between Republican Minority Leader Everett Dirksen from Illinois and Democrat Majority Leader Mike Mansfield from Montana. Many people were involved in the passage of the Civil Rights Legislation, but Republican votes were key. Mansfield acknowledged his friend; "There would be no Civil Rights Bill without Dirksen."

Don Oberdorfer tells the remarkable story about June 10, 1964, the day of the vote for cloture\* in his biography *Senator Mansfield: The Extraordinary Life of a Great American Statesman and Diplomat*.

"On the day of the vote the Democratic and Republican leaderships believed they had the votes to cut off debate, but nobody could be certain. The galleries were packed. On the Senate floor, nearly everyone was in his place. Mansfield rose and spoke first, declaring, 'The Senate now stands at the crossroads of history, and the time for decision is at hand.' Next Russell\*\*, who charged that the bill violated both the spirit and the letter of the



The Civil Rights Act of 1964 would never have passed without cooperation between Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield (left) and Senate Minority Leader Everett Dirksen (right) working together in a spirit of civility.

Constitution and 'would destroy forever the doctrine of separation of powers.' Humphrey\*\*\* spoke briefly, saying that senators voting for cloture would 'make that dream for full freedom, full justice, and full citizenship for every American a reality.' Finally it was the turn of Dirksen. Speaking in a low voice, he cited one of his favorite quotations, by Victor Hugo: 'Stronger than all the armies is an idea whose time has come.' Dirksen declared, 'The time has come for equality of opportunity in sharing in government, in education, in employment. It will not be stayed or denied. It is here.'"

"A hush fell over the chamber as the roll was called, leaving the Senate more silent, Mansfield said later, than he had ever heard it. In the end 44 Democrats and

27 Republicans, four more than the required, cast their votes for cloture.\*\*\*\*" "Nine days of debate and voting followed the imposition of cloture, but everyone knew the die was cast. Final passage came on June 19 by a 73-27 vote. After a debate, the House agreed to accept the Senate-passed bill without amendment and sent it to the White House. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Action of 1964 into law in a grand ceremony in the East Room on July 2."

\*Cloture is the process of voting to stop debate on a bill. The ongoing debate is referred to as a filibuster and the vote on passage of the bill can't be called until two thirds of the Senators vote for cloture.

\*\*Senator Richard Russell from Georgia was the leader of the Dixie Democrats who opposed the Civil Rights Legislation

\*\*\*Senator Hubert Humphrey from Minnesota was the floor manager of the Bill.

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# o Do the Work of the People

## Illinois Senate: 2009

Forty-five years later, Illinois state senators watched the inauguration of one of their former colleagues as the 44th President of the United States. President Obama fulfills the promise of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and personifies the spirit of compromise and perseverance that was responsible for its passage. The new leaders of the Illinois Senate, Democrat Senate President John Cullerton and Senate Republican Leader Christine Radogno begin their tenure with a similar promise and a pledge of a cooperative environment that will be needed to solve the problems in Illinois. With a deficit approaching \$9 billion, unemployment up dramatically, and needs in health, education, and technology, the work is daunting.

Already their capacity to reach across the aisle has been reassuring. When time came to elect the senate president, during the January swearing-in for the 96th session of the General Assembly, Radogno and Cullerton voted for one another with hearty applause from their Senate colleagues.

Cullerton, now the longest serving senator, says that one of his major goals is to create a new tone, an atmosphere of cooperation. Radogno agrees, "In the short term I hope to establish a good working relationship." Further, she says,



Senate President John Cullerton and Minority Leader Christine Radogno share thoughts at the podium of the Illinois Senate chamber.

"My main priority is getting the fiscal house in order." Cullerton says he hopes "to pass legislation to provide a solution to the massive problems in the state. My most important task is balancing the budget."

Radogno and Cullerton have much in common. Both are graduates of Loyola University in Chicago, Cullerton majored in political science and law while Radogno completed a masters degree in social work. Cullerton and Radogno are strong advocates for public service and support citizen participation as key to strong government.

Both senators say they are good listeners and want to hear all sides of the story. Cullerton says that he will approach negotiations

with the attitude, "Let's sit down and talk." Radogno agrees. She says "it is much easier to have a positive atmosphere if you have a respectful process."

Senators Cullerton and Radogno pledge to find a path that brings economic stability, creates a positive atmosphere, and finds solutions to the problems for Illinois citizens. The two leaders will be challenged to keep a civil tone when so much is at stake. But they only need to look back to the daunting challenge and unlikely passage of the Civil Rights Bill to put the challenges of 2009 in perspective. They are off to a good start with give and take across the aisle that would impress Dirksen and Mansfield.

**Article by Jane Angelis, a volunteer for Senator Mike Mansfield in 1964**

# Facts on the NGA Illinois Policy Academy

## The Civic Engagement of 50+ Illinoisans in Service, Learning & Work

**Who:** The Core Team and an Advisory Team represent a broad group of organizations and businesses that have an interest in the engagement of older adults in service, learning, and work. One goal is that 200 organizations will be involved by May 11, 2009.

**What:** The purpose is to champion civic engagement and to make it more visible and accessible for those age 50 and older. Work groups were created to target volunteer management, learning, school involvement, publicity, work, and policy.

**When:** The Policy Academy started in July 2008 with a one-day site visit in Illinois by the NGA Policy Academy to facilitate initial planning and goal setting. The Illinois Core Team assessed current policies, programs and resources related to civic engagement strategies for older adults. A statewide advisory team was recruited and met in Chicago, Springfield and by conference call to gather the ideas and suggestions of experts representing

the economy, workforce, education, health, and information technology.

**When:** In September, the National Governors Association convened a meeting of the state teams in Annapolis, Maryland to help refine goals and begin to develop an action plan. The last national meeting will be held in March 2009. After these Policy Academy meetings and throughout the project, the NGA Center staff monitors each state's progress and provides customized technical assistance. An evaluation and re-setting of goals will take place in June 2009.

**Why:** Initially the Core Team and the Advisory Team—will work with the NGA Policy Academy to increase the engagement of 50+ Illinoisans and embrace the racial, ethnic, and regional diversity in Illinois through three strategies:

1. Communicating the importance of civic engagement to retirees, policymakers, employers, and the citizenry;

2. Developing an infrastructure that will create opportunities and access to work, learning and volunteering;  
3. Developing policy to support engagement in Illinois.

**How:** Illinois has developed a significant coalition of organizations committed to promoting civic engagement.

- Six work groups are mobilizing efforts for civic engagement related to the Workforce/Workplace, Education P-20, Volunteer Management, Learning, Policy and Publicity.
- Presidents of universities and community colleges are developing units on their campuses to connect retirees to service, work and learning.
- A resolution has been submitted to the General Assembly that supports civic engagement.
- Coming on May 11 at the Illinois Capitol: A Day of Celebration and setting new goals for older adult civic engagement in Illinois.

*Vision for Civic Engagement: All Illinoisans 50+ have opportunities and to engage in meaningful activities through employment, volunteerism and learning and have access to those opportunities.*



## Thoughts and Ideas from the Illinois NGA Advisory Team

Key to the development of an infrastructure is collaboration

- between education, business, and communities,
- between aging and youth programs and
- between cultural and socioeconomic groups
- We must open our eyes and minds to new ways of doing things
- Economic strength will come by creating a consciousness of the global society and how Illinois must compete.

### Older Workers

- Consider the impact of business and what they need to know about planning future workforces
- Some retirees want to work, some have to work.

### Volunteering

- Identify organizations that help volunteers get involved and hone management skills
- Just as P-20 emphasizes communication between all levels of education, volunteer management emphasizes communication between organizations targeting volunteers.
- There are many existing resources in the state: Our challenge is to identify them, understand their missions in relation to civic engagement, and involve them.
- Publicize the realities of liability

### Learning

- Work with the Lifelong Consortium of Older Learner Programs to reach older learners who aren't engaged
- Word-of-mouth recruiting has been effective for older learner programs.

### Process

- Get the engagement concept coordinated in community colleges and universities
- Keep it simple
- Though this is a statewide project, the community and neighborhood are the focus for our activities.
- The key is to develop support and identify an easy method to link talents with needs.



Charles Johnson, director, Illinois Department on Aging and Team Leader for the NGA Policy Academy, asks the advisory group to provide their thoughts on civic engagement in Illinois.

Clockwise: Ashley Dearborn, Illinois Board of Higher Education; Dave Bennett, Illinois Press Association; Terry Solomon, African American Family Commission; Amy Sherman, CAEL; Bob Gallo, AARP; Nancy Chen, Womens Bureau, Dept. of Labor, Johnson, and Senator Ed Maloney, chair, Higher Education Committee

### Connections and Publicity

- Provide information on what exists
- Remember that asking is the most important word in volunteer recruitment
- Develop a database of information about volunteer opportunities and retiree talents
- Tell the stories of retiree engagement
- Use all forms of technology, such as social networks and web sites for connecting older adults to volunteer opportunities.
- Share information and opportunities because everyone can deliver information to their constituents
- Find and highlight exemplary programs so that all can experience the excitement and enthusiasm

### Policy

- Develop education policy carefully and with the involvement of stakeholders.
- Civic engagement for older adults is for all 102 counties in Illinois and as a result may reflect different needs and different resources. All are valuable.
- Explore the process of adopting a legislator
- Develop strategies for advocacy
- Prepare a resolution about civic engagement

## Six Work Groups Mobilize Efforts for Civic Engagement

### Workforce/Workplace, P-20 Education, Volunteer Management, Learning, Policy and Publicity.



**Policy Chairs: Mike O'Donnell, Marilyn Hennessy and Senator Ed Maloney**

Objective: Developing policy that supports civic engagement of 50+ Illinoisans



**Volunteer Management Chairs: John Hosteny and Bernie Wong**

Objective: Developing capacity for older volunteers and supporting effective management

**Learning Chair: Bob Mees**

Objective: Involving older adults in learning programs for socialization, work, and enrichment



**P-20 Education Chair: John Sirek**

Objective: Linking older generations with volunteer opportunities in schools and with the youth-service network.



**Workforce Chair: Peggy Luce**

Objective: To help business understand the value of older workers and how the workforce will change with retirement of their skilled employees.



**Publicity & Media Chairs: Bob Gallo, Jane Angelis & Charles Johnson**

Objective: Communicating the importance of civic engagement to retirees, policymakers, employers,

#### Workforce Assessment Tool

The Workforce Group is designing a workforce center to help dislocated older workers seeking assistance to find jobs and disseminating the Workforce Assessment Tool\* produced by AARP that will help employers in nine practice areas:

- Capturing your Employee Age
- Demographics
- Assessing for Potential Skill Shortages
- Knowledge Retention
- Flexible Work Arrangements
- Training and Development Opportunities
- Benefits: Health and Financial
- Workplace Accommodations
- Positive Work Environment
- Recruitment

<http://www.aarpworkforceassessment.org/template/index.cfm?CFID=16845991&CFTOKEN=67979377>

### Advisory Team: Illinois Policy Academy

- African American Family Commission, Terry Solomon, Executive Director
- American Family History Institute, Pat Bearden, Director
- Chicago Life Opportunities: CJE Senior Life and Life Ways: Anne Rich, Director
- Changing Worlds, Mark Rodriguez, Executive Director
- Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, Amy Sherman, Director Workforce
- Choose Dupage: Michael Skarr, Investment Services & Exec Dir Emeritus, Naperville Chamber of Commerce
- Coalition of Limited English Speaking Elderly (CLESE), Marta Pereyra, executive director
- Depaul University Student, IL Campus Compact, Eric Powell, VISTA Leader
- Executive Service Corps, Marcia Lipitz, Executive Director
- HURRAH, Naperville Intergenerational Program, Russ Marineau, Director
- Illinois Association of Community Action Agencies, Dalitso Sulamayo, executive director
- Illinois Association of School Boards, Linda Dawson, Director of Editorial Services
- Illinois Campus Compact: Kathy Engelken, Exec. Director
- Illinois Council on Aging: Gene Verdu, President
- Illinois Community College Board, Elaine Johnson, Senior Director Workforce Development
- Illinois Community College Trustees Association, Joan DiLeonardi, Treasurer & Bd member, Oakton Com. College
- Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity, Mike Baker, Workforce Development
- Illinois Principals Association, Jason Leahy, Exec. Director
- Illinois Press Association: Dave Bennett, Exec. Director
- Illinois Senate, Deanna Demuzio
- Illinois State Board of Education, Susie Morrison, Deputy Superintendent
- Illinois State Library, Sharon Ruda, Director, Blind and Physically Handicapped
- Intergenerational Advisor, Mary Walsh, Rosemont
- Knox College Student, Colin Davis
- Lt. Governor's Office, Cory Foster
- Liaison to Learn and Serve, ISBE
- Lifelong: The Illinois Coalition of Older Learners, Maria Malayter & Center for Positive Aging, National-Louis Univ.
- Loyola University Chicago, Don Wycliff, Distinguished Journalist in Residence
- Midwest Peace Corps, Virginia Koch, Regional Manager
- National Able Network, Inc: Grace Jenkins, CEO
- Northwestern University (and non-traditional student representative IBHE), Ashley Dearborn
- Retirees Leading Initiative, Carol Davis, Director and Vice President, Spoon River College
- SCORE (Senior Corps of Retired Executives), James Forstall and Emeritus IL Board of Higher Education
- Serve Illinois (Commission on Volunteerism), Scott Nierman, Executive Director
- SIU Edwardsville, Roger Maclean, Director of Outreach
- State Universities Annuitants Association, Linda Brookhart, Executive Director
- University of Illinois Extension, Judith Richardson,
- University of Illinois Urbana Champaign and Student Representative IBHE, Jerry Thor
- Women's Bureau, US Department of Labor: Nancy Chen, Director

### Core Team: Illinois Policy Academy

#### Core Team Leadership

**Team Leader: Charles D. Johnson, director, Illinois Department on Aging**

**Project Director: Jane Angelis, director, Intergenerational Initiative, Southern Illinois University Carbondale**

#### Core Team Members

**Bob Gallo, state director, AARP**

**Marilyn Hennessy, retiree and trustee, Retirement Research Foundation**

**John Hosteny, Illinois director, Corporation for National and Community Service**

**Peggy Luce, vice president, Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce**

**Edward Maloney, chair, Senate Higher Education Committee**

**Robert Mees, president, Illinois Community College Council of Presidents, and president, John A. Logan College**

**Michael O'Donnell, executive director, East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging and liaison, IL Assoc. of AAA**

**John Sirek, director, Citizenship, McCormick Foundation**

**Bernarda Wong, president, Chinese American Service League**

# Solving Problems through Creative Dialogue

## Generations Connect: An Illinois Tradition

Younger and older generations are often isolated from one another but when they get together, “We find solutions to problems,” said one retiree during a meeting called, putting our heads together. A student chimed in, “When we don’t have opportunities to talk to our elders, we don’t learn about the real world from those who are the experts in survival.”

Generations Connect conversations foster communication between students and retirees and bring new momentum to solve old problems. These conversations started in 1988 when one of the early advisors, Pat Brady, vice president of the Board of Governors, led a “speakout” during the Governors Conference on Aging. The most common theme was “Let’s do this again.” Older and younger generations want to have more time together.

In 1990, seven regional discussions



**First Lady Michelle Obama (center front) was a leader in the Generations Connect discussions held in preparation for the 1995 White House Conference on Aging. On December 14, 1994, Public Allies, a youth service organization chaired by Michelle Obama and RSVP, an organization of Retired Senior Volunteers, led by Keith Chase-Ziolek participated in a discussion on intergenerational issues. The dialogue between young people and older adults was one of 30 held throughout Illinois. Michelle Obama was the founding executive director of Public Allies Chicago.**

called A Circle of Helping explored ways that generations could help one another. They discovered that their perceptions about the purpose in life and education were similar. No intergenerational conflict here! In 1992 Helene Block Fields of Oakton Community College convened two major

discussions in Chicago and Springfield called the Three C’s of Intergenerational Success: Communication, Comfort and Creativity.

In 1993, twelve meetings were held based on the John Gardner philosophy that “Most men

and women go through their lives using no more than a fraction—usually a rather small fraction—of the potentialities within them.” RSVP programs throughout the state joined with community colleges and universities to explore the potential for tapping the “reservoir of intergenerational talents.” In 1994 thirty intergenerational groups came together in dialogue to discuss how they could foster more connections between generations. These meetings were held in preparation for the 1995 White House Conference on Aging and the results were published in a White Paper that was part of the preparatory materials for the Conference.

A Healthy Aging for All Ages was the topic of conversations in 1996. Old and young discovered they had many similarities including “eating too much junk food,” and some started setting goals for good health. In 1998-99 business people and students met in 15 communities around the state to talk about the workforce and how students should prepare. Work ethic was a popular topic. Students readily admitted that older generations had a strong dose.

In 2000 the Governor’s Summit on Aging provided another discussion of the contributions of older adults to education. That year also marked a new discussion about service learning and its importance to Illinois students and all Illinois citizens. Keith Sanders, the head of IBHE, led the discussion.



In August of 2000, Keith Sanders, executive director of the Illinois Board of Higher Education (far left on panel) welcomed leaders from aging, education and service. Forty-five people squeezed around tables in the Chatterton Room at IBHE to discuss the benefits of service learning and how education could foster civic responsibility.

In 2003, younger and older generations came together to discuss family stories and how they could promote the saving of their stories. Through oral history interviews, students gain communication skills and stories from elders are recorded.

*Generations should  
have more contact and  
Generations Connect  
meetings have planted  
the seeds.*

In 2005 presidents and chancellors on 30 campuses sponsored Generations Connect conversations about the interaction between younger and older generations. A survey of those involved pointed to several ideas about how they could make changes. Just under 70% thought that they would benefit from more intergenerational contact and when asked how they could make

the world a better place, the most common response was “Create a climate of understanding.”

In 2005, the first Senate Forum on Intergenerational Leadership brought university students and retirees together in the Senate Chamber. That scene was repeated in 2007. “We have to do this more often, said young and old from the podium of the Senate.” It is a mutual feeling that generations should have more contact and Generations Connect meetings have planted the seeds.



Dave Christiansen, a retiree from SIUC, joins students in a small-group discussion.

# Let's Talk about Public Policy that Impacts Older and Younger Generations

By Patrick Callan and Andrew L. Yarrow



Patrick Callan

While America's deepening economic woes cast a pall over the nation, long-term U.S. fortunes are profoundly threatened by parallel crises of cost, quality, access, and equity in health care and higher education. Once-proud symbols of national greatness, these sectors no longer deliver world-class results, are increasingly inequitable, and elicit growing discontent from many Americans.

The U.S. health care bill is \$2.3 trillion, 16 percent of gross domestic product - roughly double the percentage for Western Europe, Canada, Japan, and other rich countries. Spending is rising by 7 percent a year, with Medicare increasing by 13 percent in 2007. Escalating health-care costs are the leading cause of personal bankruptcy and are why America's \$10.6 trillion national debt is projected to soar. Waste

is a major culprit, manifested in such problems as vast overhead costs, overuse of medical services, insufficient competition and lack of information about cost-effective practices.

The United States also spends about 3 percent of GDP on higher education - again, roughly twice the percentage of virtually every other developed country. While health-care costs have risen 2.5 percentage points faster than economic growth, higher education costs have increased about 3.5 percentage points faster than GDP growth for the last several decades. Exploding higher education costs have caused real student loan debt to more than double in a decade.

Government support through Pell Grants and other student assistance has risen, but cost increases have outpaced public investment in financial aid. Reasons for this cost growth include the knowledge-based global economy and rising aspirations creating a seller's market for college; an "arms race" among colleges to have the fanciest facilities; and weak financial accountability and few incentives for controlling costs. The problem would be bad enough if it were just a matter of cost. But it's not. Not long ago, the United States was arguably tops in both higher



Andrew L. Yarrow

education and health care. No more. To make matters worse, a nation whose cherished ideals of equality were advanced immeasurably during the 20th century by the diffusion of high-quality health care and higher education now has become troublingly inequitable in both.

The World Health Organization reports that about three dozen other nations have better aggregate health-care outcomes than America, and the RAND Corporation finds that barely half the treatments Americans receive are considered "best practices." Similarly, the United States is no longer the world leader in college access, and is in the bottom half in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development rankings in college completion rates and 10th in the proportion of its 25-to-35-year-old population that is college-educated.



Higher education increasingly reflects and reinforces inequities in American society. Large gaps in college access associated with race and income have not narrowed for decades. The wealthy can afford Ivy League tuitions, the upper middle class falls into debt to attend flagship state universities, the lower middle class also borrows heavily to enroll in regional state colleges and community colleges, and poor Americans simply lack college opportunity. What's more, the quality of much of higher education itself has declined, sliding behind both earlier U.S. standards and those of many other countries.

At the same time, nearly 50 million Americans lack health insurance, tens of millions have limited medical coverage, and millions more may lose coverage due to the current economic crisis. Access to good care varies tremendously by income. A sizable population faces the triple whammy of inadequate insurance coverage, poor health behaviors, and lower-quality health providers - compared to a decently covered middle class and a health-conscious elite with access to the world's best medicine. This has created a trifurcation of American health care equivalent to a beat-up Chevy, a new Toyota and a Rolls-Royce.

Few Americans are satisfied with their medical care. The once-friendly and admired image of a selfless corps of Marcus Welbys has given way to a more widespread belief that doctors, hospitals, and pharmaceutical companies are

greedy, insensitive, incompetent and dishonest.

Likewise, three-fourths of Americans are worried about college costs and debt. Barely half think that students get a valuable return on higher education. Half believe that colleges "mainly care about the bottom line." And three-fifths think that talented students lack the opportunity to attend college; among African-Americans and Hispanics the proportions are even higher.

The danger to a prosperous, optimistic American future is enormous. Serious cost control, accountability for high-quality outcomes, and greater equity are desperately needed. Systemic overhaul of health care and higher education requires an outcry from the public and the business community, as well as political champions who understand that larger public subsidies without substantial reforms will not suffice; greater engagement by health-care and higher-education leaders; and public-policy intervention that recognizes the failure of market mechanisms to yield quality, affordability and access.

Higher education needs substantial rethinking about delivery and financing. Can online instruction be adapted and broadened to strengthen learning and reduce costs? Can colleges work collectively with high schools to identify readiness standards? Can transfer of credits among two- and

four-year colleges become seamless, reducing costly and redundant course repetition? Can state finance and accountability systems increase college access and completion? Do four-year colleges need to look like swank corporate conference centers? And should scarce financial aid now used to compete for gifted - but less needy - students be refocused to qualified students strapped for resources?

How to control health-care costs is an even tougher nut to crack. Universal insurance - with government premium support, combined with some "managed competition" among insurance providers and greater cost-sharing - are important. Increased regulation of health-care providers and their costs, greater emphasis on public health and prevention, medical malpractice reform, some rationing of care, and use of information technology to disseminate best and most-cost-effective practices and maintain a national medical records database also could help.

Without such changes, even with additional public investments proposed by President-elect Barack Obama and others, America will be less and less likely to be healthy, wealthy or wise.

**Patrick M. Callan is president of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. Andrew L. Yarrow is the vice president and Washington director of Public Agenda, and author of the new book, "Forgive Us Our Debts: The Intergenerational Dangers of Fiscal Irresponsibility."**

**This article is reprinted with permission of the authors. It was published in the Jan. 11, 2009, edition of The Baltimore Sun.**

## Public Agenda's Students Face Up to the Nation's Finances

Public Agenda's Students Face Up to the Nation's Finances initiative provides a free package of learning materials (readings, films, slides, student discussion guides, surveys, Web links, and opportunities for students to contribute essays, videos, and communicate online) designed to raise students' awareness of our nation's fiscal challenges (our \$10.6-trillion-and-growing national debt--exacerbated by the current financial crisis--and its causes and potentially calamitous consequences), and engage students across the nation in a discussion of the solutions.

The materials can be adopted in part or as modules within existing classes, or used for other campus forums. We are especially interested in hearing and gathering student opinions and ideas, which they can convey as class assignments and submit to [www.facingup.org/students](http://www.facingup.org/students); submissions will be eligible for prizes each semester, and will be used to better impress upon policy makers and opinion leaders that young people care about our nation's fiscal future.

To review, download, and use our learning and discussion materials, please sign in at: <http://www.facingup.org/faculty>. If you have questions about this initiative or how best to use it in your class or on your campus, please go to our website and/or contact Andrew Yarrow, [ayarrow@publicagenda.org](mailto:ayarrow@publicagenda.org) or 202-719-9777, or Gail Gottlieb, [ggottlieb@publicagenda.org](mailto:ggottlieb@publicagenda.org) or 202-719-9752.

## Local Discussions Feature Aging is an Asset for the Future

The idea for Aging is an Asset came from a Senate Forum on Intergenerational Leadership. College students said that they wanted more contact with retirees. Retirees said, "Society doesn't always consider us resources."

Six of these forums have been held over the last three years. The first on higher education opened the door to discussion about retirees as students, volunteers, and advocates for education. The second considered the opportunities for schools (P-20+) by involving retirees, connecting generations, and establishing stronger communication throughout the education pipeline. The third, based on the Blueprint for Elder-Friendly Communities, explored the ways that communities should prepare for increased numbers of older people and the role of education in preparing for an aging society. The fourth, Aging is an

Asset for the Workforce examined the workforce in Illinois from the perspective of the employer, the worker, and education. The fifth on civic engagement was a delightful experience comparing the leadership and service perceptions of four generations. The sixth, and most recent, was on the media, how it is changing and the trends for how older people use the media, particularly newspapers.

The Aging is an Asset Series is open to local groups who want to gather information through focus groups and research about the impact of aging on life in Illinois. Aging is an Asset discussions and policy papers were produced on each topic and are available on the website. If you are interested in hosting an Aging is an Asset Forum, see the website, [www.siu.edu/offices/iii](http://www.siu.edu/offices/iii), or contact Jane Angelis at [jane.angelis@gmail.com](mailto:jane.angelis@gmail.com).

*Aging is an Asset: Rather than ask the question, What should we do with all these old people, ask what should be do with all these resources?"*

## Aging Population Offers Opportunity for Our State



**Gary Metro, Editor, Southern Illinoisan**

People who view their long lives of work and experiences as strong selling points had to be encouraged by the news coming out of an important gathering Monday at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

Participants in the gathering, "Aging is an Asset for the Media," heard many of those selling points in a presentation by Marty Davis, campaigns and promotions director for AARP in Washington, D.C. They learned of a large and growing population of aging adults - often referred to as the baby boom generation - who intend to remain engaged participants in all spheres of life.

The gathering was the sixth in the Aging is an Asset Series, created to collect and examine information about the experience of aging in Illinois and the resulting impact on higher education, schools, communities, the workforce and civic engagement. Earlier sessions

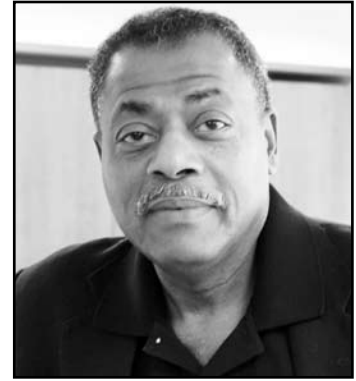
were held in Chicago, Springfield and Bloomington, and the series will create a statewide plan to engage retirees in various types of civic service and education.

Davis offered a forward-focused view of aging that differs markedly from what can be expected from mass media stereotypes. The baby boomers generally will be healthier, more active and more involved in employment, education and civic participation than any previous generation. They also will be more numerous than previous generations of seniors.

Here are some of the characteristics to be expected of those who were born between 1946 and 1962:

- Higher median household incomes than their parents' generation, \$66,000 compared to \$34,000
- Nearly a third of the group will have completed at least four years of college
- Nursing home populations are declining, despite the growing population of older Americans
- Those who are older than 50 control 77 percent of the nation's financial assets and 57 percent of the nation's discretionary income

Any generation will inevitably experience the hardships of aging - illness, isolation, financial and other hardships - but the growing body of information on the newest generation of seniors indicates those difficulties won't characterize most of those people in their early years of retirement.



**Marty Davis, Director, Campaigns and Promotions, AARP**

Davis and media participants discussed various ways to improve connections between the baby boom generation and their preferred sources of information - newspapers and Web sites. Better communication will improve the link between unmet needs and willing and skilled volunteers, identify transportation opportunities for those who do not drive and enable older adults to find areas in which they might seek employment, or perhaps a second career.

The population of Illinois is aging, and our region already has a larger population of older residents than other areas of the state. The numbers will increase annually, but generally the new seniors will be active, healthy and seeking ways to remain connected with their communities. It is important to recognize this demographic change as an opportunity and we commend the participants in the Aging is an Asset Series for their proactive efforts to improve the state of Illinois.

**With permission from the Southern Illinoisan: Editorial, Tuesday, October 21, 2008**

# *Lifelong: A Coalition of Older Learner Programs in Community Colleges and Universities*

## **National Speakers Series**

**W**ith a growing population of retirees and older learners, where is education headed? This was a question answered during a new National-Speaker Series sponsored by the Lifelong Coalition. The conference call joined program directors from community colleges and universities to hear about a recent report, Mapping

New Directions: Higher Education for Older Adults, which was funded by MetLife Foundation. President Charles Middleton of Roosevelt University and board member of the American Council on Education (ACE) introduced the speaker, Mary Beth Lakin. Participants in the conference call offered insights on aging and how educational institutions relate to an aging society.

The election of new officers was a business item and the current officers received the equivalent of a standing ovation. They have served their colleagues well through communication and providing useful information. New officers represent the four corners of the state and will continue providing information about older learners and the programs that serve them.

## **Outgoing Officers and Executive Committee: Served from 2004-2008**



**L to R: Chair: Anita Revelle, Illinois State University, Normal; At Large: Lana Campbell, SIU Carbondale; Lori Crabtree, Rend Lake College**  
**Those who will continue: Maria Malayter, National Louis University, Lisle; Margaret Plaskas, Waubensee Community College, Sugar Grove**  
**Not Pictured: John Allen, Lincoln Land Community College, Mike Shore, Highland Community College, Freeport; Cheryl Barber, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign**

## **New Officers and Executive Committee: 2009-2011**



**L to R: Chair: Maria Malayter, National Louis University, Lisle; Vice Chair: Margaret Plaskas, Waubensee Community College, Sugar Grove; At Large Member: Carol Davis, Spoon River College, Canton; At Large Member: Cheryl Brunsmann; SIU Edwardsville; At Large Member: Douglas Brauer, Richland Community College, Decatur**

### Purpose of the *Lifelong* Coalition

- **Support to New Programs**

Those starting new programs find a wealth of experience and advice from other members.

- **Welcome Retirees to Campuses**

Older learner programs develop strategies to involve retirees on campus as learners, mentors, advocates and in second and third careers.

- **Discuss New Trends for Older Learners**

The Lifelong Coalition advocates for policy and programs that address the educational needs and interests of retirees.

- **Conduct Research**

Studies highlight the educational needs and interests of retirees and their habits of volunteering.

- **Increase Publicity about Older Learner Programs**

Lifelong informs boards, presidents, and the General Assembly about older learners and their contributions to education and the economy.

- **Explore the Benefits of Civic Engagement**

Lifelong will work with the new *National Governors Association Illinois Policy Academy* for Civic Engagement to help connect retirees to learning, service and work.

Directory of Older Learner Programs in Illinois available at [www.siu.edu/offices/iii](http://www.siu.edu/offices/iii)

## The Future of Education for Older Learners

Five experts provided comments on the future of learning for the aging society. Maria Malayter and Anita Revelle head the Lifelong Coalition and John Neidy, Kathleen Pecknold, and Judy Mann head Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes.

**Jon Neidy,**  
director, Osher  
Lifelong Learning  
Institute,  
Bradley  
University



Americans are retiring in ways different from their parents and grandparents. They're retiring both earlier and later, exploring second (or third or fourth) careers, are giving back to their communities, and expecting more from their retirement experience. As they age, they are also engaging

more in their own learning. More than previous generations, they are pursuing their interests more deeply, are investigating new ideas and technologies, and intend to contribute to society in deep and meaningful ways. For higher education, this shift translates into a new group of students who bring much to the campus—including successful careers, broad experiences, and substantial networks. Not only do these lifelong learners offer colleges and universities the opportunity to gain new supporters and broaden community ties. They also present higher education with a wonderful opportunity to develop programs and services that will engage these learners in the campus community. In terms of outcomes, it creates an interdependent group of learners and campus administrators who construct true learning communities that benefit everyone involved. It's worth exploring.

**Anita Revelle, outgoing chair,**



**Lifelong, and  
director, Senior  
Professionals,  
ISU**

Coordinators for  
academic lifelong

learning programs need to take a fresh look at new learners who are retiring. Many have college degrees and are looking for new venues or programs to pursue in their retirement. These new learners aka "Baby Boomers" like flexibility in their schedules, which might mean revamping schedules by offering class throughout the year and in different time formats. For example, classes might include two days a week for two weeks instead of four times a month. This schedule allows older learners more time for traveling and other activities. Illinois State University attracts these new learners through current event issues such as the Middle East, the economy, historical classes and overviews of

the economy, historical classes and overviews of specific countries or regions. Trying new classes sometimes is a gamble, but the payoff can mean big rewards for the program and new students.



**Maria Malayter,**  
**chair, Lifelong**  
**Coalition, and**  
**director, Center**  
**for Creative**  
**Aging, National**  
**Louis University**

A vision of the future reveals the idea that learning will not end with formal academic schooling but will continue throughout one's life. Learning will be a continuous process embracing a balance of work, personal, and community-life commitments.

Multigenerational learning and mentoring environments will be fostered throughout local residential communities to promote inclusion for all ages. Federal and state agencies will maintain clearinghouses of information for integration of incoming residents into the learning, work, and civic experiences of the community. In addition, a government research team will monitor lifespan theories every five years to ensure policies for citizens are appropriate for full engagement in the community throughout a lifetime. Finally, when the US becomes the global leader once more, citizens and immigrants of this country will embrace and honor human beings throughout their life.

**Kathleen**  
**Pecknold, director,**  
**Osher Lifelong**  
**Learning Institute,**  
**University of**  
**Illinois Urbana-**  
**Champaign**



Like other Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes (OLLI) at colleges and universities around the country, the University of Illinois differs from traditional lifelong learning programs in several major respects. It is the model for the future for older adult learning programs.

First, the organization is member driven. We have an elected Board, which appoints committees on administration and budget, curriculum, membership, and volunteerism. Members recommend the budget (including member fees), develop strategic plans, decide what intellectually stimulating courses and study groups should be offered (and who should teach them), plan membership recruitment and retention strategies, and review volunteer opportunities.

There are no tests or grades; courses and activities take place in a supportive environment with members from diverse backgrounds who are united by a love of learning and an enthusiasm for staying young in mind and spirit. As one of our members put it, "We have created a playground for the mind!"

**Judy Mann,**  
**director, Osher**  
**Lifelong Learning**  
**Institute,**  
**Northwestern**  
**University,**  
**Evanston**



There are more than 500 lifelong learning programs across North America. These programs are part of a worldwide phenomenon that is helping change the way society looks at older adults and their continued involvement in life.

OLLI at Northwestern was established in 1987 as the Institute for Learning in Retirement, one of only a few peer-led programs in the U.S. OLLI now has over 500 members on two Northwestern campuses and offers over 60 study groups. In this program, many are still active in their fields, semi-retired or volunteering. This is direction in which lifelong learning is headed: toward the actively engaged learner. OLLI at NU is committed to the concept that older learners learn best when they are active in their own learning process. At OLLI, "Curiosity Never Retires."

Northwestern's OLLI members also lend oversight to almost all aspects of the program: governance, communications, membership, curriculum and social activities. A stunning literary and art OLLI Journal is the culmination of a year of creativity.



# The Story Behind the Osher Foundation

*Mary G.F. Bitterman, president of the Bernard Osher Foundation shared the following story about the Osher Foundation. She wrote "Of the many deserving causes to support in the world, Mr. Osher has been deeply compelled to assist the education of re-entry students and seniors – two important social groups who are often overlooked by the traditional educational system." She sent her good wishes to all Illinois older learner programs.*

**Bernard Osher**  
Founder of the Osher Foundation  
San Francisco, California

My four siblings and I had the benefit of a college education – an opportunity unavailable to our parents who immigrated from Russia and Lithuania. I decided early on to support scholarships for people who desired education but had severely limited financial resources. I know what a big difference higher education makes in a person's life – enhancing career choices, earning power, and self-esteem – and I would like to help as many people as possible to have that chance. The letters I have received from Osher Reentry Scholars are particularly moving as they describe the difficulties – academic, social, and economic -- of returning to college after a break of several years.

I am convinced that continued learning is an essential ingredient for leading a healthy and productive life. The stimulating courses, special lectures, travel programs, and social events conducted by each of the 123 Osher Institutes are quite remarkable and enhance the happiness and well-

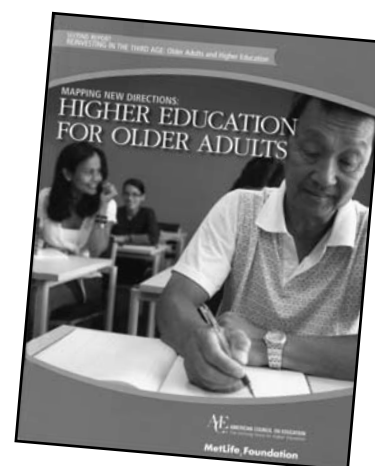
being of the Institute members, whether they are 50 or 100 years of age (our institutes have members across that full chronological range).

I've befriended numerous seniors who feel life has passed them by once they hit 80, and others who continue to tackle new challenges into their late 90s – what makes the difference for those willing to learn something new even later in life?

As far as I am concerned, every day presents ongoing opportunities to learn. For me, the challenges range from keeping abreast of stock market activities and expanding my knowledge of opera texts to reading all manner of periodicals and books on international affairs, American history and mid-19th to mid-20th century American painters, Jewish life, integrative medicine, and scientific innovations. The one absolutely new endeavor that I began last year when I turned 80 was piano lessons. I am making progress overall and there are days when I think my practice playing is reasonably good – but then there are days when my fingers won't talk to me. I am fortunate to have a gifted and forgiving teacher.

The Foundation supports a growing national lifelong learning network for seasoned adults. The Osher Lifelong Learning Institutes, operating on the campuses of 123 institutions of higher education from Maine to Hawaii, have a National Resource Center at the University of Southern Maine.  
<http://www.osherfoundation.org>

**From the American Council  
on Education and the  
MetLife Foundation**



**Mapping New Directions: Higher Education for Older Adults** points the way to greater postsecondary participation among older adults.

<http://www.acenet.edu/Content/NavigationMenu/ProgramsServices/CLLL/Reinvesting/MapDirections.pdf>

**Aging 2009**  
**Aging in America**  
**Annual Conference of the**  
**American Society on Aging and**  
**the National Council on Aging**

**March 15-19 | Las Vegas, NV**

Aging in America, the 2009 Annual Conference of the American Society on Aging and the National Council on Aging takes place March 15-19 in Las Vegas. The ASA-NCOA Conference, with nearly 4,000 attendees, is recognized as a showcase for programs and projects that can be replicated, a forum for policy discussion and advocacy, and a prime source of information on new research findings in aging. It is the largest gathering of a diverse, multidisciplinary community of professionals from the fields of aging, healthcare and education, along with business leaders from across the United States.

With someone turning 50 every seven seconds, the demands and challenges to meet the needs of this growing population increase by the minute. As a member of this dynamic conference community, you'll be among leaders in the field exploring original ideas, fresh approaches, latest research and future opportunities essential to your continued effectiveness.

<http://www.agingconference.org/asav2/conf/jc/jc09/index2.cfm>

# Don't Cheat the Children

Connecting Generations Through GrandFriendships

Helene Block Fields

In this conversational-style book written for parents and seniors, intergenerational pioneer Helene Block-Fields tells powerful true stories of children who grew stronger, smarter and more compassionate because of interactions with seniors who shared their time and wisdom with them.

She defines her new word, GrandFriendships, as "comfortable two-way connections between children and trustworthy related or non-related seniors who live near one another." The most time-honored examples of these connections are those between caring grandparents and grandchildren. However, in today's fragmented society, additional GrandFriendships are much needed by both generations. Guidelines for parents are included to help set up these connections in families, neighborhoods, schools, places of worship, and other safe settings. Significantly, the "payback" for the seniors is, in the words of a popular ad, priceless.

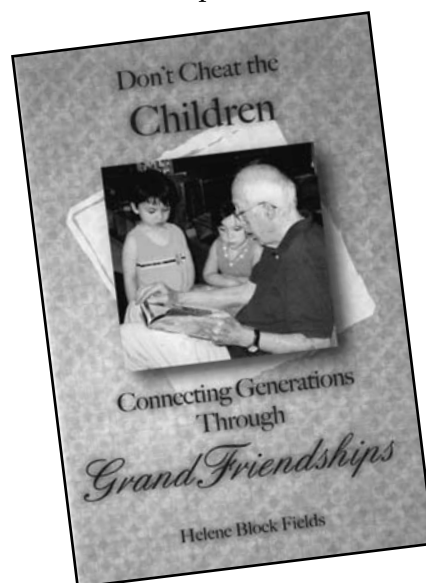
The book includes:

- Reasons why GrandFriendships are needed in today's stressed-out society
- The story of elementary school kids bonding with the frail elderly
- Powerful feedback from those same kids 20 years later



- Action Steps for parents and seniors to jump-start GrandFriendships

"Our children's and grandchildren's futures will be jeopardized if we don't begin creating and honoring more GrandFriendships now." HBF



[www.grandfriendships.com](http://www.grandfriendships.com), or  
on amazon.com

# The Last Word

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## Key Principles for Public Engagement

From the Public Agenda

*Public Agenda has been involved in public engagement for over thirty years, and our experience has taught us the differences between authentic public engagement and “business-as-usual” approaches to public involvement. These principles are key for true public engagement:*

**1. Begin by listening.** Be alert to the issues that non-experts care about, the language they use to discuss them, and their concerns, misperceptions and initial sense of direction with respect to solutions.

**2. Attend to people’s leading concerns.** When there are gaps between the priorities of leaders and those of the public, it is important to recognize that people will be most receptive to leaders’ concerns if the issues that they themselves are already feeling most concerned about are acknowledged and being addressed by leaders.

**3. Reach beyond the “usual suspects.”** Find ways to include the broader public, especially those whose voices have traditionally been excluded.

**4. Frame issues for deliberation.** Help people wrestle with the differing perspectives, and the pros and cons of going down different paths.

**5. Provide the right type and amount of information at the right time.** It is helpful to provide people with carefully selected, essential, nonpartisan information up front in order to help them deliberate

more effectively, but it is equally important to avoid overloading people with a “data dump.”

**6. Help people move beyond wishful thinking.** The trade-offs that are embedded in any issue that citizens must confront should be brought to the surface. Challenging leaders who pander to people’s wishful thinking and providing corrective information once it’s become clear the public is “hung up” on a misperception or is lacking vital information are key tasks here.

**7. Expect obstacles and resistance.** It takes time, and repeated opportunities, for people to really work through problems, absorb information about the trade-offs of different approaches, and build common ground.

**8. Create multiple, varied opportunities for deliberation and dialogue.** People need to go through a variety of stages to come to terms with an issue. decide what approach they are willing to support and figure out how they can make their own contribution. Community Conversations, “study circles,” online engagement strategies and media partnerships are a few of the possibilities.

**9. Respond thoughtfully and conscientiously to the public’s involvement.** It is critical that leaders respond to the public’s deliberations. For instance, participants should be informed of the ways their ideas and concerns are being incorporated into the work. Moreover, it means taking the time to explain why some ideas are not being incorporated. Doing so deepens people’s understanding of the issues and fosters mutual respect.

**10. Build long-term capacity as you go.** When done well, each round of public engagement will set the stage for broader and deeper public engagement in the future. The work should always operate on two levels simultaneously: On one level it is about addressing a concrete problem, such as improving education, public safety or jobs. On another it is about building the capacity for a democratic community to communicate and collaborate effectively in order to solve its common problems and enrich its public life.

[http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/public\\_engagement\\_primer.pdf](http://www.publicagenda.org/files/pdf/public_engagement_primer.pdf)

**Save the Date - May 11, 2009**

*A Day of Celebration and Conversation about  
the Civic Engagement of Older Adults*

**"The American people are ready to serve their communities, but not enough  
have been asked or know how." President Barack Obama**

**"Everyone can serve!" Governor Patrick Quinn**

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*The Capitol, Springfield, Illinois*  
*9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.*

**Join the Illinois Team of the National Governors Association Policy Academy  
on the Civic Engagement of Older Adults**

**Help Celebrate Older Americans Month and AmeriCorps Week**

**Learn more about increasing service, work and learning for retirees**

**For information: Gidget Freeberg, Illinois Department on Aging 217-557-8312**



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